

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 10 July 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
10 JULY 1968

1. France

Pompidou's replacement by Couve de Murville seems to indicate that De Gaulle plans to exercise even tighter control over the government's policies than he has in the past. Pompidou's relations with the president have been strained since the May crisis, and we think one reason is that he displayed too much independence then. He is also said to disagree with some of the more radical reforms De Gaulle is planning, particularly the scheme to let workers participate in the management of their enterprises.

Couve, on the other hand, is described by his opponents as the "best messenger boy in the government." He is essentially a gifted but very loyal and somewhat cynical bureaucrat.

Although Pompidou obviously can no longer be considered De Gaulle's heir-apparent, we would not count him out.

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For the time being we expect him to take his seat in the National Assembly and operate from there.

2. Soviet Union

Satellite photography of late June shows construction has started on four new groups of silos for the large Soviet ICBM, comparable to our Titan II. (There had apparently been a slow-down in new starts for this weapon in 1967.) This brings the number of launchers for this ICBM to some 230.

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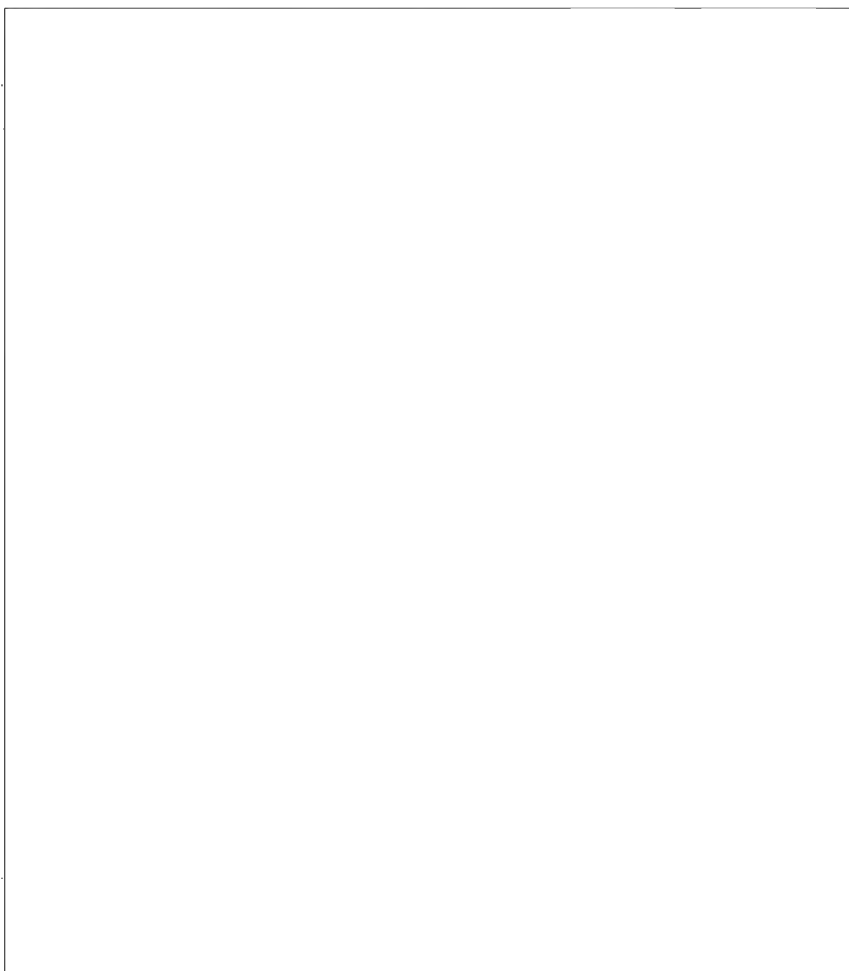
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3. Soviet Union

We also learn from satellite photography that the Soviets have begun producing a third type of attack submarine. This latest class is being built in the Soviet Far East; we can not tell yet what sort of a propulsion system it will have. The other two types, both of them nuclear-powered, are being produced in the western Soviet Union.

4. Nationalist China

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5. Soviet Union -
Czechoslovakia

The Soviets and their conservative allies in Eastern Europe are keeping up the pressure on Prague.

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Pravda on Sunday added its voice to the chorus demanding that Prague return to orthodoxy. Brezhnev on Monday weighed in with his third speech in a week on Western "ideological subversion" in Communist Europe.

All this verbiage is backed up by Soviet forces along the border. Some troops and aircraft also remain in Czechoslovakia itself, and the Czech defense minister has now hinted publicly that he is having trouble persuading them to go.

In the face of this pressure the leaders in Prague continue to insist that what goes on inside Czechoslovakia is the business of the Czechs. They doubtless have been heartened by the rank-and-file backing they received over the weekend, when regional party organizations picked a solid pro-Dubcek majority for the party congress in September. They seem so sure of themselves, in fact, that it would take direct Soviet intervention--open or covert--to stop them.

Although neither side wants to push the dispute to the point of military conflict, they are skating on thin ice. Moscow's unwillingness to remove its troops is particularly disturbing.

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6. Poland

Hard-line opponents of Gomulka made some significant gains in the central committee meeting which ended yesterday. Interior Minister Moczar, their leader, was elected to the party secretariat and to a candidate membership on the politburo. Gomulka, whose authority was once nearly absolute, could not prevent open clashes between his supporters and Moczar followers.

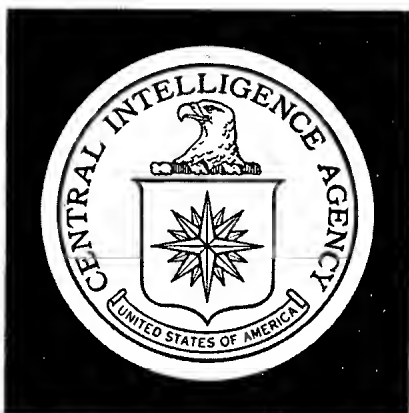
Further intense maneuvering can be expected between now and the party congress in November.

7. North Korea -
South Korea

Infiltration from North Korea has increased over the past two weeks or so. We expect it to continue at the present rate into the fall. Most of the infiltrators encountered so far seem to have been equipped for reconnaissance and have avoided contact with US or South Korean forces.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes

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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only**

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



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More on Thant's Talk with Xuan Thuy: U Thant has told an American official that nothing new in Hanoi's position appeared during his talk with Xuan Thuy on 6 July. He said he foresees long, hard negotiations, and that at present he sees no role for the United Nations.

Describing the conversations, Thant said that Thuy reiterated only well-known North Vietnamese positions. Thuy predicted that the talks would continue despite the lack of progress and said that private talks at this stage would "not make any difference."

Thuy declared to Thant that the US has always distorted the Geneva Agreement, but "the whole world knows what it means." He praised Governor Harriman as "a good man" who "has to be guided by instructions from Washington."

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American Fliers: A French radio broadcast reported yesterday that three American pacifists will leave Paris this morning for Hanoi to pick up the three captured pilots North Vietnam is to release.

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The three--Anne Scheer, Vernon Grizzard and Stuart Meacham--will hold a press conference at Orly Airport before their departure. There is as yet nothing official from Hanoi on procedures for the release.

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Propaganda Efforts: In a Paris press conference on 8 July, the North Vietnamese charged that the US, while talking of its restraint, has continued and intensified the war. The charge was accompanied by a long recitation of statistics designed to show the growing ferocity of US attacks on North Vietnam. The North Vietnamese spokesman declared that the US, despite its modern weapons, cannot overcome the hatred and will of the Vietnamese people. He dodged questions concerning the release of American pilots, explaining that he did not know the details of the planned release.

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Pyongyang and Peking Host North Vietnamese Delegation: Pyongyang took the occasion of the visit of the North Vietnamese government economic delegation to reiterate its support for Hanoi and to repeat its offer of "volunteers" if requested. A Pyongyang broadcast on 8 July asserted that discussions had proceeded well and that an agreement was reached that day for North Korea to provide free economic and military aid to North Vietnam. The delegation, headed by politburo member Le Thanh Nghi, had earlier visited Moscow and Eastern Europe. Yesterday it went on to Peking, where it was reported to have been greeted by 500 cheering Red Guards, and by an official Chinese delegation headed by Vice Premier Li Hsien-nien. The Red Guards, according to French Press Agency reports, were waving slogans denouncing US imperialism and supporting the "heroic fight of the Vietnamese people."

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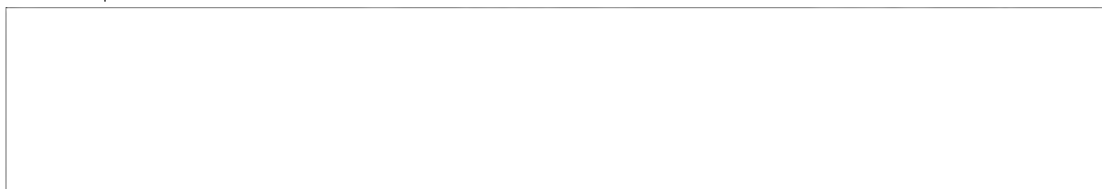
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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